

# BANCROFT MILL ENGINE TRUST

GILLIANS LANE, BARNOLDSWICK, BB18 5QR,

[www.bancroftmill.org.uk](http://www.bancroftmill.org.uk) Registered Charity no: 517795

**Steaming,  
Sunday  
November  
11<sup>th</sup>  
2012.**



Following the mill steam whistle over Barnoldswick and two minutes silence at 11.00am to honour the fallen of WW1,

Bancroft Mill resumed its preparations for the engine start at 1.00pm. Soon afterwards our special visitors, Pendle Heritage Centre Archaeological Group arrived for a tour of the museum before embarking on Pendle's "Steam and Stream walk around Barnoldswick. The guests were conducted around the museum by your scribe and Anthony Pilling who is a member of both organisations. Here you see Anthony explaining the mill engine's Corliss valve gear to members of the group before moving on to other areas of the museum. Alas, available time was too short and soon the visitors had to move along to the rest of their programme in the town but not before visiting our "Weaving Shed".

Here Anthony really came into his own as we could have no-one so well versed in the intricacies of the Pilling loom as a direct descendant of the founder of the original manufacturer, Pillings of Colne.

The loom that we use was made in 1926, the company having been founded in Trawden in 1819 by John Pilling who was succeeded over the years by several generations of John Pillings! The first looms were wooden in their main construction but used a few cast iron components made in Clitheroe. The company moved to a site near to Primet Bridge in Colne in 1843 and continued to trade right

up to 2005, however it had also built a foundry alongside as it started to make cast-iron looms. The foundry supplied frames, gear wheels and major cast parts for up to 3000 looms a year over period of more than a hundred years. That foundry remains in business today on the same site but specialises in aluminium castings.

Anthony has had a crucial input to the last couple of tasks to be undertaken on the loom and, when the belt of punched cards in the Jacquard mechanism that makes the pattern was damaged, he personally repaired the belt with new cards. These cards are made to programme the loom to weave a particular pattern, in this case the Bancroft name on the tea towels that many of you have bought from the mill shop. The cards were made using a hand punch and die set jointly made by Geoff P and your scribe.



This set the loom off weaving again but not for long as the beam, carrying the warp was soon to be exhausted and a new one needed. It's a matter of considerable regret that this fitting and setting up took a long time, we are not weavers and it has been only the dedication of Peter Robinson, Anthony and Ian McKay that has seen us through to running again. We know that you will not have worn your red tea towel out – but how about a green or a blue one now to complement it?

Left: Anthony Pilling prepares the loom for a demonstration run,

Below: punch and die set for Jacquard cards.



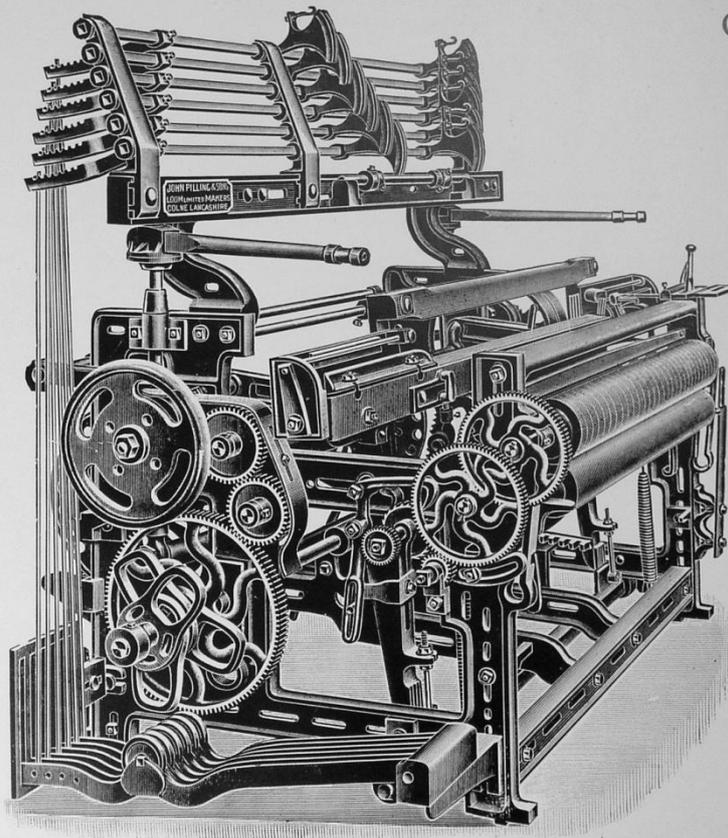
Our loom, still working, is a living tribute to its design and manufacture; we still weave tea towels and this is despite the loom having had a number of owners and lots of weavers over the years. Thanks to Anthony Pilling we are able to reproduce overleaf the original catalogue illustration of the loom (from the 1920's) a rare addition to our archives.

Note the telephone number, Colne 42!

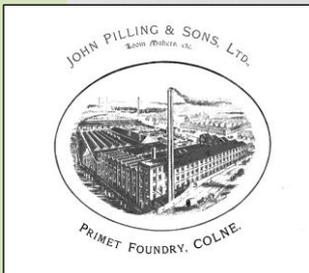


TELEGRAMS: "PILLINGSON, COLNE."  
TELEPHONE: COLNE 43.

John Pilling & Sons, Ltd.,  
LOOM MAKERS AND  
TEXTILE MACHINISTS.  
Colne, Lancashire.



SIX SHAFT CROSSROD LOOM.



**Like the Bancroft loom but without the Jaquette attachment.**

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**Work on a patio outside the cafeteria continues which David N says is near completion, drinks on the patio next summer? A nice thought for a warm summer day!**

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**The final steaming for 2012 is on 02.12.12 when, as has become customary, the Church School girls will entertain with carols and songs, they've been practising hard and we look forward to their performance, again kindly led by Mrs. Jamieson.**

**Further information from 01943 602118 or [info@bancroftmill.org.uk](mailto:info@bancroftmill.org.uk)  
We're on Facebook too, control+click on the link below!**

